

## Message Text

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45

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 PA-02 EUR-06 SS-07 PM-03

INR-09 INRE-00 CIAE-00 EB-05 IGA-02 DODE-00 AF-05

MED-01 PRS-01 SCA-01 SCS-01 SPM-01 IO-09 NSCE-00 /113 W  
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O P 291315 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1298

INFO RUTPMAA IMMEDIATE NIACT

CINCEUR IMMEDIATE NIACT

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE NIACT

CINCUSAFE IMMEDIATE NIACT

USINT ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : SWEL TS

AIDAC

SUBJECT: SITREP NO. 1 - TUNISIAN FLOOD EMERGENCY

REF: TUNIS 1613

ALSO PASS AID DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR

1. SITUATION. GOT STILL ATTEMPTING TO ASSESS  
EXTENT FLOOD DAMAGE. FLOODING LARGELY CONFINED  
TO NORTH, PRINCIPALLY UPPER MEJERDA VALLEY  
BETWEEN ALGERIAN FRONTIER AND MEDJEZ EL BAB AND  
AS CLOSE TO TUNIS AS DJEDEIDA WHERE MAIN GOT  
RADIO STATION FLOODED. ( ALSO REPORTEDLY IN  
EASTERN ALGERIA, BUT WE HAVE NO DEFINITE INFORMATION  
ON THIS.) FOCUS OF ACTIVITIES IS ON AIR EVACUATION  
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OF STRANDED PERSONS IN LOW VALLEY AREAS. INITIAL GOT ESTIMATE IS AT LEAST 30 TO 40,000 PERSONS AFFECTED. TUNISIANS HAVE TURNED TO US, FRANCE, ITALY, LIBYA AND ALGERIA FOR ASSISTANCE, MAINLY AT THIS POINT FOR HELICOPTER SUPPORT HELP. AMBASSADOR AND AID OFFICIALS HAVE JUST MADE RECONNAISSANCE MISSION OVER FLOODED AREAS AND REPORT SITUATION EXTREMELY SERIOUS WITH PEOPLE SEEKING REFUGE IN TREES AND ROOFTOPS. IMPOSSIBLE EVACUATION WILL BE COMPLETED IN LESS THAN SEVERAL DAYS AND ADDITIONAL US HELICOPTERS REQUIRED URGENTLY ( TUNIS 1633). ACCORDING OFFICIAL WEATHER FORECAST, MORE RAIN LIKELY THIS EVENING AND TOMORROW.

2. ASSISTANCE EFFORTS. AS OF NOON MARCH 29 TUNISIANS HAVE ONLY REQUESTED HELICOPTERS SUPPORT FROM US. AIRCRAFT CARRIER FORRESTAL CURRENTLY OFF TUNISIAN COAST NEAR TUNIS. SIX ( SH-13 TWIN ENGINE) HELICOPTERS FROM FORRESTAL OPERATING OUT OF TUNIS AIRPORT TO ASSIST IN AIR EVACUATION OPERATIONS, WHICH TUNISIAN MILITARY DIRECTING. USS SAMPSON ( GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYER) ARRIVED TUNIS LA GOULETTE MARCH 29. ITALIANS HAVE SENT SIX UH-1 HELICOPTERS LIBYANS HAVE PROVIDED ONE C-130 AIRCRAFT AND THREE HELICOPTERS. FRENCH ARE STILL ASSESSING REQUIREMENTS. ANTICIPATE GOT WILL REQUEST ADDITIONAL US ASSISTANCE IN FORM OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES, RATIONS, TENTS, BLANKETS.

3. FINANCIAL ASPECTS. AMBASSADOR HAS AUTHORIZED USE OF \$25,000 TO COVER INITIAL US ASSISTANCE. IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS TIME ASSESS ANTICIPATED ADDITIONAL COSTS, BUT KNOW THESE WILL FAR EXCEED THIS AMOUNT. THEREFORE, WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

4. COORDINATION. AMBASSADOR HAS APPOINTED ACTING AID DIRECTOR GORDON PIERSON AS MISSION DISASTER RELIEF COORDINATOR. USAID IN PROCESS ASSESSING IN- COUNTRY TITLE II AVAILABILITIES AND OTHER POTENTIAL ASSETS. AMB HAS ALSO ESTABLISHED EMBASSY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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**TAGS:** SWEL, TS  
**To:** AID  
ALGIERS  
CINCEUR  
CINCUSAFE  
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